



Committee on Homeland Security

Democrats

**Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking
Member**

www.house.gov/hsc/democrats/

April 27, 2005

*Contact: Nadra Harrison
202.226.2616*

DEMOCRATS OFFER PLAN FOR INCREASING NATION'S SCREENING CAPABILITIES

April 27, 2005, Washington, DC — Committee Democrats will introduce an optimizing technology amendment today at the open markup to consider the Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act for fiscal year 2006.

Congressman Norman Dicks (D-WA), along with Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment introduced the amendment. Congresswoman Lofgren stated, **"I represent Silicon Valley, where countless innovative technologies to make our economy and society more efficient are developed. One area that we need to work on is the processing of immigration applications. The current system is archaic and in need of being brought into the 21st century."**

The amendment would require the Secretary to prepare a report to Congress on the status of the effort to achieve real-time interoperability of an Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System and an Automated Biometric Identification System. Provisions in the amendment call for evaluating biometric identifiers and cataloguing immigration applications biometrically, and to move to a paperless system to process immigration benefit applications, as well as arrival and departure forms.

###